

THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE RAINBOW AFGHAN

The Women's Secretariat (TWS) will be selling raffle tickets for a Rainbow Afghan. The money will go towards offsetting the cost of TWS Chair and Co-Chair to go to Australia. The tickets will be \$1.00 a ticket...6 for \$5.00. The Drawing will be announced. **PLEASE SUPPORT US IN THE EFFORT TO GO TO GENERAL CONFERENCE '97 TO REPRESENT THE WOMEN OF THE GLAD DISTRICT!**

WOMEN'S CAUCUS

The Women's Caucus will be held Saturday Morning at 9:30. (Please look in your packet for the room number.) If there are some women from your church attending conference, please encourage them to come to this caucus. This is our time of listening to the needs and concerns of the women of the GLAD District.

THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT WORKSHOP

STARTING FROM THE BEGINNING

The history and the future of the GLAD Women's Secretariat. This discussion of the ministry to and of women through the Secretariat will be led by co-chairs Libby Puckett and MaryEllen Dowdy. Libby is a member of MCC Charlotte, and MaryEllen is the Administrative Assistant at Christ Covenant MCC.

THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT...recognizing the gifts and power that women contribute to the fellowship and the world.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN THIS MINISTRY!!



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The Women's Secretariat Newsletter

A Quarterly Publication of
The Women's Secretariat, GLAD District

MARCH, 1996

THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT... WHERE DID IT ALL BEGIN?

At the 1989 General Conference, many women joined their voices in asking General Council to create a Fellowship program centered on the gifts, needs, specific concerns, and issues of women in UFMCC.

In October 1990 such a program was created by General Council. A Steering Committee was appointed by the Elders to develop and facilitate the program's growth. The Steering Committee and our Women Elders met to dialogue about the development of the program for women that very first meeting in October 1990.

Rev. Elder Jean White suggested we consider using the name "Secretariat", which is a much more recognizable term internationally than a term such as "commission". Thus, **The Women's Secretariat (TWS)** was birthed.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of The Women's Secretariat of UFMCC, is to recognize the gifts and power that women contribute to the fellowship and to the world.

GOALS

The goals of TWS are:

- 1) to provide a framework for all women to support, heal, nurture, and empower one another, and
- 2) to recognize and work to eliminate all barriers to the full participation of women at the local church, district, and fellowship levels.

The TWS Symbol was adopted by the women of the GLAD District at the Spring Conference in Johnson City, Tennessee. Whenever you see this symbol in the future, know that The Women's Secretariat Program is involved in some way.



*When you feel that you have reached the end
And that you cannot go one step further,
when life seems to be drained of all purpose,
what a wonderful opportunity to start all over again,
to turn over a new page.*
Eileen Caddy

*Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith,
love, endurance and gentleness.*



The Women's Secretariat of The GLAD District

Is a Program offered by The
Universal Fellowship of
Metropolitan Community
Church
(UFMCC)

*We believe in recognizing the
gifts of the women of the
Gulf Lower Atlantic District and
empowering them to use these
gifts to reach out to those in
their community.*

Libby Puckett, Chair
4019 Teakwood Drive
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(704)529-6117 (FAX/in home)
1-800-685-7240/PIN 8137

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778 Ray's Road, Suite 100
Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083
(404)297-0350

CALLING YOUR OWN WORKSHOPS

By MaryEllen Dowdy

So! Imagine you go to a conference and there is not one workshop you find interesting. How very boring!!!

WEELLLLLLLLLLLLL!!!! Here is an opportunity to give us some suggestions on workshops you would like to see at conferences. We all have areas in our lives that we wonder about and some of those things we all have in common. What a wonderful way to get some of our questions answered by dialoguing with others about that subject.

One of the big ones for me is the transgendering issue. I'm not sure I understand all of it, in fact I'm sure I don't. My Pastor, Rev. Shepherd, has a friend who is the director of AEGIS (American Education Gender Information Services) and she said she would be more than happy to come and do a workshop on transgendering.

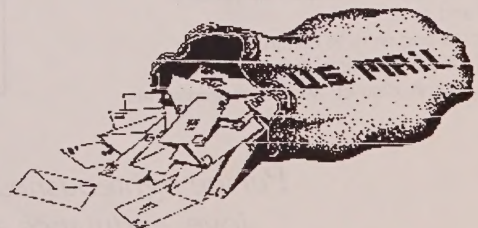
I think TWS needs to look at this issue and talk about it since we have a responsibility to not only be informed but also to welcome these "new" women into our group.

Please let Libby and I know any suggestions you have for workshops at upcoming conferences. We will do all we can to see that they happen. Hope to see alot of you in Nashville.

MAILING LIST

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE ON THE
MAILING LIST OF THE WOMEN'S
SECRETARIAT NEWSLETTER? IF SO,
PLEASE SEND YOUR ADDRESS TO
LIBBY. INCLUDE YOUR NAME,
ADDRESS, AND THE CHURCH YOU
ATTEND.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING
FROM YOU!!!**



MY FIRST EXPERIENCE

By Karen Harris, TWS Rep
Christ Covenant MCC
Stone Mountain, Georgia

On October 6, 1995 during a Congregational meeting, I was presented with a unique opportunity. I, Karen Harris, was chosen to represent Christ Covenant Metropolitan Community Church at the District Conference as The Women's Secretariat Representative. Thoughts must truly be things, because no sooner had I said to myself, "I wish I could do something at this conference", than Joy Callahan, a long time friend and member of Christ Covenant, nominated me and I accepted.

After getting through the initial excitement, my thought was, "can I as a straight woman truly make a viable contribution to my church in this role?" I wanted to more than anything because the love, acceptance and healing I have received at Christ Covenant has been unlike anything I have ever experienced in any church I have attended, and my church affiliations have been many. I decided to "turn off my head", turn on my heart and go for it!

The Women's Secretariat is a relatively new program with the Metropolitan Community Church. The possibilities for services to women and growth for the district are considerable. The first meeting was Friday evening November 17, 1995 at 10:00 p.m. Initial business was handled, elections were held and a discussion was begun about the most appropriate time for TWS Meetings to be held in the future. The following morning, November 18, 1995, communication strategies were developed to forge ties throughout the GLAD community.

My experience in being part of this conference can be summed up in one word: STUPENDOUS! The meetings were both "consciousness expanding" and FUN! One in particular...exploring gender issues I had never realized existed. While I initially felt silly when asking a question, I knew this was my opportunity to get over my fears of seeming DUMB, and being self-protective, to just be Karen. Amazingly, when I allowed myself to be just Karen, I discovered to my great joy how much love, and real fellowship can be experienced. I cannot believe that a year and a half ago I did not know that Metropolitan Community Churches even EXISTED because a cornerstone of my spiritual growth has occurred at Christ Covenant MCC culminating in my appointment as TWS Representative. I look forward to the year ahead serving my church in this role.

Spiritual love is a position of standing with one hand extended into the universe and one hand extended into the world, letting ourselves be a conduit for passing energy.

Christina Baldwin

WHO, ME?

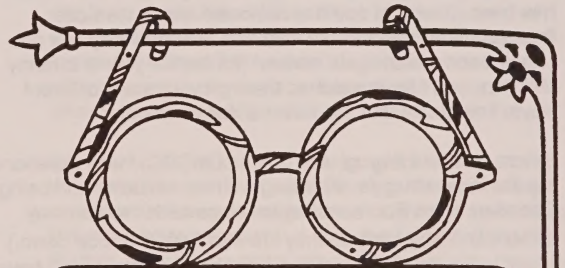
Matthew 3:13-17

Jesus went to John the Baptist seeking to be baptized. John, feeling woefully inadequate to wash Jesus, said, "Who, me?" "Yes, you!" said Jesus.

So it is with us. Surprised by the call, befuddled by the voice we hear within, we ask God, "Who, me?" "Yes, you!" says God, and the journey begins. An awesome invitation, an amazing responsibility, a humbling realization that things will never be seen in the same way again.

"Jesus calls us to the way, the Sophia, the life. Grant us the wisdom to discern your voice, recognize your direction, and proceed on our journeys with courage and conviction. Amen."

(Taken from...Spirit Journey/A Walk Through Matthew)



**WE ARE IN SEARCH OF
WOMEN SECRETARIAT REP.'S
DOES YOUR CHURCH HAVE A TWS
REP? IF YOU DO, PLEASE CONTACT
LIBBY OR MARYELLEN AND LET
THEM KNOW WHO YOU ARE. IF YOUR
CHURCH DOES NOT HAVE A REP.,
PLEASE APPOINT SOMEONE*,
AND SEND THE INFORMATION IN.
*THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR OUR
NETWORKING PROCESS!!!!!!**

"Going from the Valleys in Life to the Mountain Top Highs"

I remember singing the song "The Old Rugged Cross", and the next thing I knew I found myself standing in front of my Camp Director sharing with her that God was calling me into the ministry. That was nineteen years ago and here I am now. I have traveled many roads with God, and we have shared many experiences with each other. **I have gone through the valleys of life as well as experiencing the mountain top highs.** One of the most memorable mountain top highs that I can remember was the day I walked into MCC Charlotte.

Hi, my name is Libby Puckett, and I am your new Chair of The Women's Secretariat. I live in Charlotte, NC (host of the Fall Conference '96). I attend and I am a member of MCC Charlotte (MCCC). I have sat on staff of this church, but at this time I do not hold any positions at MCCC. I love God with all my heart and being a part of this church has brought me closer to God!

I attended Southeastern Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC and graduated in the Spring of 1981 with a Masters Degree in Religious Education. I had all intentions of being a Youth Minister, but God had other plans. Although I am not working on staff in a church, I do have a ministry in and of itself...I work with two-and-a-half and three year old children. Many people have asked me why I am not working on staff in a church. My response to them has been...the right one has not come along...besides these children need all the love and attention they can get. I have been a 'surrogate mother' (for twelve years) to many children, and I have watched them grow in many different ways. I must say that it is never a dull moment!

Before I walked through the doors of MCCC, I was experiencing the inner struggle of dealing with my sexuality and being Christian. (I am Southern Baptist since birth...so you may understand why I felt as if my life was turned upside down.) I kept telling myself that this cannot be possible. I can't have these feelings and still be a Christian. This is not how I was taught. There must be something wrong with me.

I prayed and prayed that God would give me an answer, and one day I found myself walking through the doors of MCCC. I knew for the first time, in a very long time that there was a place for me in the house of God. I knew that after many trials and tribulations God had brought me home. I found a place where it didn't matter who I loved, but what did matter was my love for God.

That was five years ago, and I know more today than I did back during those struggling times, that God has called me to a wonderful ministry. She has called me to be her disciple to go out and to reach out to those who are in our community who still struggle on a daily basis, with the idea of being a Christian and being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender.

This is why I feel so strongly about TWS. Our mission statement says: **"The purpose of The Women's Secretariat is to recognize the gifts and power that women contribute to the fellowship and to the world."**

It took me a long time to receive my gifts from God, because I did not feel worthy enough to receive them. It was not until I walked through the

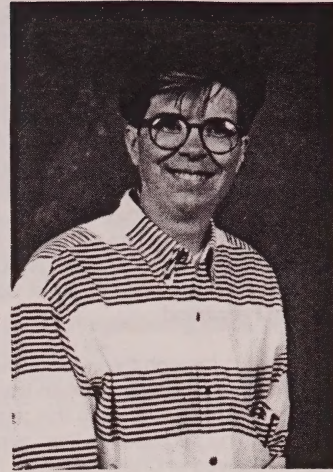
doors of MCCC that I realized that I was worthy, and it was then that I truly felt my call to be God's servant...to reach out to those who do not feel worthy, and show them that God loves them just as they are.

I would like to share a poem with you that we read at The Women's Share at Fall Conference in Asheville:

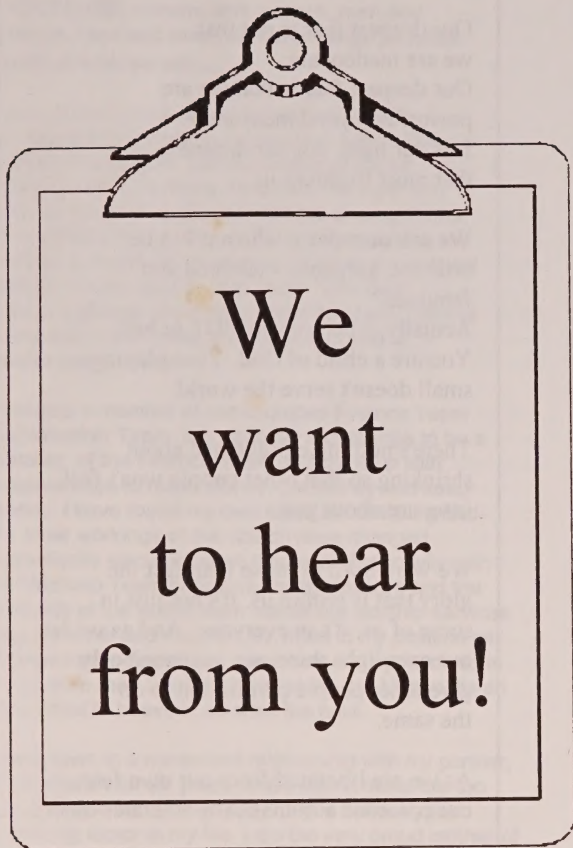
in the pattern of God's purpose
we are stitched together in caring and communion:
scraps of the lingering past,
fragments broken from future's dearest hopes;
textures of disappointment and dreams,
prints of pain and promise:
calico and corduroy,
stripes, silks, and satins —
all the colors of emotion and experience
are sewn
into a crazy quilt
of life,
patched together and transformed
into a blanket of love...
and our compassion
comforts
a cold and hurting world.

Barbara Battin

My dream for The Women's Secretariat is that we can grow from all of our experiences...that we can share our common thread of Christ's love for us, and become a blanket of love to comfort our cold and hurting world. I am excited about the things that are going to take place with the women in the GLAD District! I know God has many wonderful things in store for us. I hope and pray that you will become involved in TWS in your church, and become a part of this crazy quilt that is mentioned in the poem above.



(Continued on next page)



(Going from the Valleys in Life.....)

We are all like the different pieces of material that this poem mentions. We come from different places. We have experienced many different events in our lives. We have so much to offer. Just imagine how wonderful it would be for all of us to come together and share our experiences with each other, and the gifts that God has given to each one of us.

This is what The Women's Secretariat is all about... "recognizing the gifts and power that women contribute to the fellowship and the world." It is a time of sharing and a time of growing. **Get excited with us...get involved...become a part of The Women's Secretariat at your local church!**

Please pray with MaryEllen and myself as we begin this journey of leadership together. Pray that God will guide us to know what direction TWS needs to take in the GLAD District. Pray that we will see the visions that God would have us to see, and the knowledge to fulfill them. Especially pray that the women in the GLAD District and throughout the Fellowship may be touched by the ministry of The Women's Secretariat!

WE DO WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU....this newsletter is for you, the women of the GLAD District.

This newsletter has been discussed in several of our caucuses at District Conferences. You have asked that this newsletter become a reality...so here it is. You have asked for a way of keeping in touch with each other across our district. We hope this newsletter will provide you with the opportunity of keeping each other in touch with what God is doing in your church.

What do we want for our newsletter? We would like to hear what is going on with the women in your church. Do you have special programs for the women in your church....Potlucks, Women's Sharing, etc.? If so, share with us what programs are meeting the needs of the women in your church. We hope by sharing your information with us via this newsletter, other churches will be able to benefit from your programs as well.

What else do we want? As you can see in this newsletter, there are a few poems. Do you write? Do you have a poem you have written that you would like to share....then send it in. Maybe you have a poem that you have found that means something to you...share that with us. What has inspired you may inspire someone else. Maybe you have a devotion or meditation that holds a special place in your heart...would you be willing to share it with us? We want this newsletter to be your newsletter. If you have something that you feel other women would benefit from, please send it in.

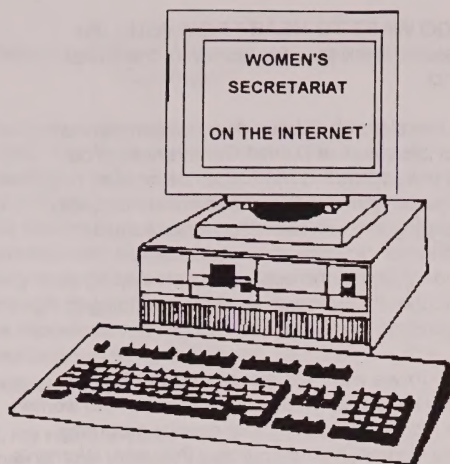
We are excited about this new program of The Women's Secretariat (GLAD District). This newsletter can be whatever you want it to be! We hope by making this newsletter a reality that you, the women of the GLAD District, will help us make it the best newsletter it can be.

We are trying to publish this newsletter once a quarter. This being our first publication, and wanting it to be the best it could be we were not able to meet our original deadline. However, our next deadline for material to be sent in is: **April 5, 1996**. We would like to have our next newsletter out before District Conference in Nashville.

You can send articles for the newsletter to:
Libby Puckett
4019 Teakwood Drive/Charlotte, NC 28217

When I am afraid,
I will trust in you.

Psalms 56:3 NIV



What an exciting idea! The Women's Secretariat on the InterNet! This idea was brought to us at the Women's Share (Fall Conference) by Beverly Mitzel who is a member at MCC Charlotte. As you read this article, you will find out about the "Cyberministry" that MCC Charlotte (MCCC) is working on and how it can benefit The Women's Secretariat (TWS).

MCCC has now entered into a new and evolving trend called "Cyberministry" by establishing an on-line presence via the Internet. MCCC will be able to join several other visionary MCC churches across the world in reaching many individuals with news and information about themselves, as well as the fellowship.

MCCC has been on-line since May of 1995, when it joined a group of other MCC'ers through virtual computer chat sessions via America On Line, and also through listing information about itself GLBT computer bulletin boards. It is here that Lynn Lavner heard of our church and got in touch with MCCC about doing a concert at their church. However, more recently MCCC has shown computer users a new "identity" by creating a "home page" accessed through a graphical interface to the Internet called the World Wide Web.

Through MCCC home page, users not only access information about MCC, including Worship Services, Ministries and Outreach, Newsletters and Calendars, but they may also access an entire listing of MCC's within the GLAD District, link directly to the UFMCC Fellowship's home page, and access a wide variety of community links of interest to the GLBT community.

Early statistics have indicated that the MCCC page is being accessed as many as 10 to 15 times per day by computer users worldwide. This number is sure to increase as word is spread that the page is up and has valuable information.

There already is in place, a "link" for information relating to The Women's Secretariat. This is a place for us to include information on TWS as well as place the newsletter. All we need to do is get the newsletter up and running, and we will be able to pass it on to Beverly who will plug it into the Internet.

This is going to be a great way for us to communicate with the women in our churches all around the world! If you are on line and would like to access this page, you may access the page through MCCC's temporary URL number. Their number on the Web is:

<http://www.geopages/WestHollywood/2326>

MCCC will be moving to a new address on a faster service by early spring.

If you have any questions, or need further information...please call Beverly Mitzel (704) 875-3325(h) or (704)547-2675(w) or via e-mail at: bamitzel@email.uncc.edu

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous - talented and fabulous?
Actually, who are you NOT to be?
You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world.

There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure about you.

We were born to make manifest the glory that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

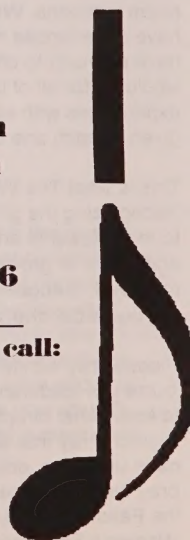
As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

1994 Inaugural Speech
Nelson Mandela

LYNN LAVNER
in concert
at the Metropolitan
Community Church
of Charlotte

Friday, May 4, 1996

For more information call:
MCC-Charlotte
(704) 563-5810



"TOGETHER, women and women, men and women, men and men, we can change peoples ideas of who we are....."

Hell-o fellow people of the female persuasion. I am MaryEllen Dowdy, your new Co-chair of The Women Secretariat. I am a member of Christ Covenant MCC in Stone Mountain, Georgia, and I am also the Administrative Assistant to my Pastor Rev. Glenna Shepherd...which of course allows me to have a wealth of information, much to do, and not enough time to do it in. But, being "The Diva" (Congregational appointed name) that I am, I attend to my duties with great joy and style!...and of course competence.

I am also a member of our churches Finance Team and Worship Team. It is certainly a challenge to be a member of the Finance Team and come up with creative ways to make money, get money and keep money. I have found my own ideas about tithing and the inner workings of the church have changed dramatically since being on this team. My activity with the Worship Team brings me much pleasure and the creativity of the entire team makes our worship services very personal and magical. By virtue of my position as Administrative Assistant I some how end up involved in much more than I ever planned to be, but I figure it's an easy ticket to heaven...so what the heck.

I have been in a committed relationship with my partner, Joy Callahan for six years, and if I don't make her too crazy, I hope for the next sixty. Joy is definitely the stabilizing factor in my life. I am the very proud mother of a seventeen year old daughter, Erin Kathleen. If God has ever blessed me, it is with this wonderful child.

I was raised in a devout Irish Catholic home the second child, first daughter of five. I went to Catholic School all my life, and pretty much bought the whole package that they sold me. I had been for a good part of my adult life what you would call a convenient Catholic, church at Easter and Christmas, and occasionally through out the year. I always felt a need to connect with a God who would love me no matter what and I also wanted the "High Liturgy" that the Catholic church does.

Communion has always been an important part for me because of my background and the belief in The Body and Blood of Christ. When I first learned of MCC and went to Christ Covenant I can't say I felt right at home but there was something there. Well, lo and behold here I am so immersed in the Fellowship that I wonder where I was before.

My spirituality comes from many different places and takes many different forms. One of the greatest sense of God's grace and love comes from my daughter, Erin. Music gives me a feeling of God's unending love and forgiveness, and serving and receiving communion is a powerful and joyous occasion for me.

As your co-chair,
I have a great
vision for TWS.
I feel there are
many areas
which need to
be looked at
and examined
by us as women
and The
Fellowship as a
whole. One of
these areas is
Transgender
people. Where
do they belong?
How do they
feel about our
group and being
a part of it?

I would like to
see workshops
addressed to this
issue from both men and women who are
transgendering. There are many questions, I am
sure, that people have regarding this issue.
Lesbians are in a high risk category for breast
cancer and I would like to see some workshops
about this; it effects men as well as women when
they lose their mothers, sisters, and friends to it.

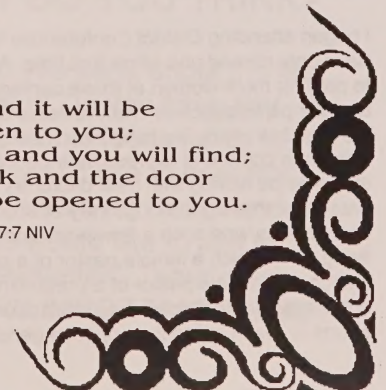
I hope that in the future the women of The Fellowship
will find all the openness and love they need from
The Fellowship collectively. I hope that the men will
not see us as threatening and overbearing because
we are outspoken and want to be heard. **TOGETHER ,
women and women, men and women, men and
men, we can change peoples ideas of who we are**
and they will come to know us as loving children of
God just as we are.

I welcome the opportunity to serve you as your co-chair
and I am always open to suggestions or ideas you have in
regards to TWS. Please feel free to contact me at anytime,
and thank you for giving me a chance to help build the vision
of our future.



Ask and it will be
given to you;
seek and you will find;
knock and the door
will be opened to you.

Matthew 7:7 NIV



GREETINGS MY SISTERS IN CHRIST! MY NAME IS

Wanda Y. Floyd...in the nine years of being a part of this Fellowship, I have come to truly believe those words. I stepped into St. John's MCC in Raleigh, NC the summer of 1987 and that is where I have stayed. I have seen a lot of changes in my local church, district, and Fellowship.

I grew up in a small town as a Southern Baptist and my speaking style reflects my upbringing. As a child growing up, I always felt that God had called me to be a part of the church in some way or another. As I grew up, my participation in church also grew from being in the choir, an usher, 4-H, Baptist Training Union, etc. The list can go on and on.

My time at St. John's MCC has been a true learning experience. I began attending during a transition period for the church and often times I would be the only Person of Color (POC) and/or woman. I felt like giving up a lot of times, but God continued to give me strength and courage and the power to stay even when things were not the greatest in the world. I have seen the church almost double its women presence in the past two years and the presence of the POC's is also growing.

I feel blessed that I have found a place within this Fellowship where I can be a part of a growing, diverse congregation that continues to be on the forefront of things. Our church was the first church in our district to appoint a female POC as Associate Pastor (me) and is still the only one that can claim that fact. We have made deliberate efforts to reach out to the women in our congregation and community by having monthly potlucks, beach retreats (two a year), a monthly newsletter and a small group that is for women only. We also have a male Pastor who preaches on diversity and inclusivity. As a result, the presence of women continues to grow and is very stable.

At our last District Conference in Asheville, I ran for Assistant District Coordinator but was not appointed to this position. I was very disappointed and it showed. I had decided not to rerun for Lay Representative because of accepting my call into the ministry. However, **when that one door closed, God opened another one.** I am now one of six women that sit on the Facilitating Council for TWS for the Fellowship. As a result of my appointment, I was asked to share a little about my vision and/or goals for the women in this district.

I began attending District Conferences in Spring of 1990 and have only missed one since that time. As I attend, I continue to pray for more women at these conferences and especially for their participation in The Women's Secretariat (TWS). In the past few years, we have been having caucuses for the women to come and express their concerns and issues that they may be having with their churches, yet the number of present at these gatherings vary at each conference. TWS sponsored a workshop a few years ago entitled "Building Bridges" in which a female pastor of a predominantly female church and a male pastor of a predominantly male church came together to discuss how their churches made deliberate efforts to reach out to the opposite gender. It became

apparent in that gathering that one of our problems is the lack of education from on high on women issues. Meaning that if it is not preached from the pulpit, then not much will be done.

I truly feel that we need to educate our pastors and strong lay leadership about the needs of TWS and how our presence can benefit them as a church and us as a district. There were women in that workshop that questioned why they needed to be concerned about women issues or the presence of women at their churches. I was appalled that this statement was coming from another woman. It all goes back to education! We, as women, need to educate ourselves on how our gifts and talents can be used within this district. We are all strong women!

I would like to see the women own the power that God gives to us by seeking and accepting places of leadership within our local church and in our district. I would like to see more women at District Conference and participating more in the services. We continue to be the fastest growing district in our Fellowship, and I believe that we can also have the largest number of women working for God in our district.

As a part of the Facilitating Council, we are going to begin working more closely with the districts and offering our help whenever possible. I believe in this ministry. If I did not, I would not have accepted the appointment. I believe God can use each woman in this district to grow and to be about the business of sharing the Gospel with those that are hurting and lost, because My Sisters, that is what we are called to

Wanda Floyd

Associate Pastor - St. John's MCC, Raleigh NC

Facilitating Council for The Women's Secretariat for UFM

A Letter to My Sisters

*Strong sisters who have walked with me,
and wept and laughed and soared with me,
Can we not yet on this life's plane
reach out, and up and up again
until by reaching, soaring, searching
at last we find the prize of living life
through women's eyes?*

*And then by Love and Faith and Grace
we'll share with other waiting hearts
the treasures of this Women's Place.*

Deborah B. Sims



WE ARE HAVING A CONTEST!

We would like to name this newsletter something other than The Women's Secretariat Newsletter.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!

We would like for you to help us name your newsletter. Do you have any ideas? If you do, we would like for you to mail them to us. (You can mail them to Libby or MaryEllen...addressess in front of newsletter.)

What do you think? Do you have a wonderful name for our newsletter? Send it in...you just might win! What will you win? If the name you have submitted should win, you will have one night of your hotel room paid at Spring Conference. (if you are unable to attend conference....other prizes will be available)

DEADLINE FOR SUGGESTIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY APRIL 15,1996....does that date ring a bell?

Thanks for helping us out...we can't wait to hear from you!!!!

**DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES
APRIL 5,1996**

REACHING FOR RAINBOWS

I keep reaching for rainbows....
Thinking one God's morning
I will wake up with rainbow ribbons in my hair,
With hurts painted over in hues that only angel
wings could brush,
Black obliterated, chaos hurled beyond the
rainbow and my vision,
The world created in a myriad of colors:
The hungry fed,
The dying held,
The maimed walking,
The angry stroked,
The violent calmed,
The oppressed freed,
The oppressors changed,
And every tear wiped away.
I keep reaching for rainbows,
But instead of colors in our storm,
Gray and black infiltrate, dirtying the sky,
And I hear human voices wailing in the
darkness,
The never-ending darkness....
Just the same
I know the promise of the rainbow.
I keep thinking I'll turn a corner one day
And find a litany of rainbows
Flung across the sky,
Hosannaing back and forth
Through all the ages and
Out into eternity forever amen!
Every tear wiped away -
It's a promise -
When we become rainbows to each other.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you think about the first newsletter? Do you have any suggestions or ideas for us to try? We would like to hear from you!!! Write us and let us know what you would like to see in "your newsletter"....your ideas are VERY IMPORTANT TO US!



*They that wait upon the Lord
shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings
as eagles; they shall run, and
not be weary; and they shall
walk, and not faint.* *Isaiah 40:31*



*I am more than happy;
I am JOYFUL.
I am more than healthy;
I am WHOLE.
I am more than alive;
I am RADIANT.
I am more than successful;
I am FREE.
I am more than caring;
I am LOVING.
I am more than tranquil;
I am PEACEFUL.
I am more than intersted;
I am INVOLVED.
I am more than adequate;
I am TRIUMPHANT.
I am more than fortunate;
I am PROSPEROUS.
I am more than human;
I am a CHILD OF GOD.*

William Arthur Ward



Imani

"Faith" (ee · MAH · nee)

Now Faith is being sure of what we hope for
and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1, NIV

The Women's Secretariat...
recognizing the gifts and power that
women contribute to the fellowship
and to the world.

Libby Puckett, Chair

4019 Teakwood Drive - Charlotte, NC 28217

Phone 704-529-5957

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Dear Clergy and Lay Delegate,

Greetings from **The Women's Secretariat of the GLAD District!**

Wow! What an exciting time for our District! Here we are in Nashville, Tennessee waiting to see what blessings this District Conference will bring. Surely we will experience **The Presence of God in Our Place** as we come from all over the GLAD District to learn and worship together.

While you are here, we would like for you to look over the information in this packet concerning The Women's Secretariat (TWS). This information will hopefully answer the question of what TWS is all about, and it will be a guide in helping you establish a Women's Program in your church. Included in your packet are the following:

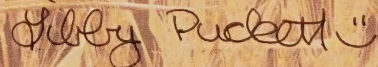
- The Women's Secretariat Newsletter (March Issue)
- The Women's Secretariat Program on the Local Level
 - ...Appointing your TWS Representative and their responsibilities
 - ...Where do you begin in your church?
 - ...Program Planning (the basics)
- TWS Needs and Assessment Survey from the Fellowship
- A Structural Diagram of TWS on the local level

Our goal for this conference...is to fill in as many blocks on the Structural Diagram as possible! We are in need of **six State Liaisons** (The State Liaisons will have the same responsibilities as the representatives, but on a state level.) and a **TWS Representative from each church**. There are a few churches in the GLAD District who have established their Women's Secretariat Representative...does your church have a TWS Rep.?

Also enclosed in your packet, are two forms. One for a Women's Secretariat State Liaison, and one for a Women's Secretariat Representative. Do you have a woman in your church who would be willing to accept one of these positions? Or do you have someone holding a Representative position, and we are not aware of it? Then please have them fill out this form and return it to us as soon as possible.

We would like to thank you for helping us work towards meeting this goal, and making The Women's Secretariat Program of the GLAD District the best it can be! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact MaryEllen Dowdy or myself and we will be glad to help you.

In Christ Name,



Libby Puckett, Chair
The Women's Secretariat

THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT WHERE DID IT ALL BEGIN?

At the 1989 General Conference, many women joined their voices in asking General Council to create a Fellowship program centered on the gifts, needs, specific concerns, and issues of women in UFMCC. In October 1990 such a program was created by General Council. A Steering Committee was appointed by the Elders to develop and facilitate the program's growth. The Steering Committee and our Women Elders met to dialogue about the development of the program for women that very first meeting in October 1990. Rev. Elder Jean White suggested we consider using the name "Secretariat", which is a much more recognizable term internationally than a term such as "commission". Thus, The Women's Secretariat (TWS) was birthed.

THE MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of The Women's Secretariat of UFMCC is to recognize the gifts and power that women contribute to the fellowship and to the world.

THE GOALS

The goals of The Women's Secretariat are:

- 1) to provide a framework for all women to support, heal, nurture, and empower one another, and
 - 2) to recognize and work to eliminate all barriers to the full participation of women at the local church, district, and fellowship levels.
-
-

APPOINTING YOUR TWS REPRESENTATIVE

When your church is choosing a TWS Representative, they should look for the following qualifications:

The TWS Representative:

- 1) needs to be a member in good standing
- 2) needs to be supportive of the women in her church
- 3) is able to attend District Conferences and gather information to take back to her church (this is not a 'have to' but would be nice if we can have as many rep's at conference as possible)

The TWS Representative's responsibilities are:

- 1) Information Distribution - announcing TWS news at your services, seeing that information gets distributed to the women of your church, putting articles in your church newsletter, etc.
- 2) Information Gathering - seeing that surveys, workshop announcements, etc. gets distributed, collected and sent back in a timely manner.
- 3) Enthusiasm Building - The TWS is going to be what we make it! It has tremendous potential as a ministry to ALL people, both in our churches and in our communities.

The tasks we set before ourselves and the manner in which we tackle them are products of our own creation, and will become the legacy that is the GLAD Women's Secretariat.

- 4) Participation in the creation of our GLAD Women's Secretariat - we will be structuring ourselves through our meetings, workshops, visions for the future, actions, etc. As an integral part of the process your participation is required at the highest level you can give. You and the women of your church are The Women's Secretariat and you must claim your portion of ownership with your attendance and input.

When you are selecting a Women's Secretariat Representative for your church, be sure that once she is appointed that she be affirmed by the church. Even though she will be representing the women at TWS functions, she will also be representing your church. Once the TWS representative has been affirmed by the church, **it is important that you, the Pastor (Pastoral Leader, Lay Leader, Interim Pastor, etc.) and she get together** and make sure that you are in agreement to work together in reaching out to the women of your church and your community. It is important that the TWS representative has the support of the Pastor. She needs to know that her voice will be listened to as she brings forth the needs of the women, and that you will work along with her to make this program work for your church.

Allow your church, as a whole, to support this process....**and watch the women in your church grow together as they become a part of The Women's Secretariat.****

****Once you have elected your TWS representative, you need to get in touch with the Chair of The Women's Secretariat and let her know who your representative is.**

WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

HOW CAN YOU MAKE TWS WORK FOR YOUR CHURCH?

As you know each church is different...

The following suggestions may help you find a way in starting a Women's Secretariat in your church, or they might not. The important thing to remember as you plan to meet the needs of the women in your church is **LEARN TO BE FLEXIBLE!**

These are what they are...**SUGGESTIONS.** The following ideas do not have to be followed to the letter. They have been put together in order to give you a starting point...a place to get the cobwebs cleared out and the creativity cranked up. Take what you can use, throw out what does not work and **GOOD LUCK IN ESTABLISHING THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT IN YOUR CHURCH!!!**

WHAT DO THE WOMEN IN MY CHURCH NEED?

Do you know what the needs are of the women in your church are? Have you taken the time to sit with them and listen to what the church could do for them? **Now is the time!** Now that your church has established a TWS representative, you now have someone

who can bring the needs of the women before the church.

HOW DO I FIND OUT WHAT THE WOMEN'S NEEDS ARE?

As said earlier, these are suggestions. Remember that these are just ideas to help get you going in the right direction. If they apply and will work for your church, then use them. If they don't, then find something that will. **DON'T EVER BE AFRAID OF BEING CREATIVE!** There are times that you have to take a leap of faith in order to get things to work. Don't allow fear to keep you from going in a new direction....but allow hope to help you reach out to the women that want to be a part of your church.

Before you begin, set up a planning session with your TWS representative.

Remember it is important to work together in setting this program up. You may have a vision of what you want the women's program to be in your church so be sure that your representative knows what this vision is. Here are some ideas you might want to discuss in your planning session.

Simply, ask them. Set aside a time for the women to come together and have a sharing time. Ask them what their needs are and how the church can meet those needs. Ask them what kind of program they would like to see established in your church.

Needs Assessment Survey. Put together an assessment survey. You and the TWS rep. can put this together. Each church is different...each survey is different. Make the survey whatever you want it to be. Whatever information you are looking for...put it on the survey. Have the women fill it out, and this will give you an idea on where your women's program needs to go.

PROGRAM PLANNING

Once you have met with the women, and received their input on what they would like to see happen in The Women's Program in your church it is time to put a program together. **DO YOU HAVE TO DO THIS ALL ALONE?** The answer to this question is no!!

1. Look through your church and find a few women who would be willing to form a small committee... women who would be willing to work with the TWS rep. to get this program set in place. **REMEMBER: The Women's Secretariat Program can be whatever the women in your church desire it to be...as long as it is meeting the needs of the women that are involved!**

2. Once your committee is formed, look over the needs assessment survey (if you had the women fill one out) and decide what direction you are going to take. **It is important to start out with small steps as opposed to giant steps!**

3. Look at the vision of your Women's Program...what would you like it to be?

"Where there is no vision, the people perish..."

Proverbs 29:18

"Nothing happens unless first a dream."

Carl Sandburg
"Vision is the art of seeing the invisible."
Jonathan Swift

Have the women look into the future...what would they like to see happen with the Women's Program in your church? Do you remember the movie 'Field of Dreams'? There was a statement that was made famous by that movie...**"IF YOU WILL BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME."** If you build your Women's Secretariat Program, and believe in it, the women will attend and your program will grow.

VISION

**Some people see things as they are
and say "Why." I dream things that never
were and say "Why not."**

4. It is important that you believe in this program in order for it to work!!! After you have looked into the future for your vision, come back to the present moment and set your goals, **and set them realistically.**

"In order to succeed we must first believe that we can."
Michael Korda

"There is a difference between wishing for something and being ready to receive it. No one is ready for a thing unless they believe they can acquire it."
Napolean Hill

**"What we believe is true, what we believe is possible,
become's what's true, become's what's possible."**
Anthony Robbins

Set your goals...believe in them...and with Christ you will see that all things are possible!!

GOALS

**No one can predict to what heights you can soar,
Even you will not know until you spread your wings.**

Spread your wings and soar with the success that God will bring to you, as you reach out to the women in your church and in your community!

4. You have looked at your vision and you have set your goals. Everything looks great on paper. Your plan of action is set into place. Now what? **It is time to make the commitment to this program and move forward.**

COMMITMENT

"Commitment is a line you must cross...it is the difference between dreaming and doing"

Are you the Pastor, the TWS rep. and the committee you have formed ready to make this commitment? Are you willing to accept the responsibility of seeing it through? Are you willing to take the risk that may be necessary in order for this program to be a success?

Remember these things as you move forward:

**"You gain strength, courage and confidence
by every experience in which you must stop
and look fear in the face...you must do the
thing you think you cannot do."**

Eleanor Roosevelt

**"All our dreams can come true--if we have the courage
to pursue them."**

Walt Disney

**"The greatest successful people of the world have used their imagination...
they think ahead and create their mental picture, and then go to work
materializing that picture in all its details, filling in here, adding a
little there, altering this a bit and that a bit, but
steadily building---steadily building."**

Robert Collier

So there you have it! How to begin The Women's Secretariat Program for your church.

- You now know what a TWS Representative is required to do.
- You have been given a few ideas on how to find out what the women's needs are.
- You now have an idea on how to begin the Women's Program in your church.
 - ...look at the vision for the Women's Program
 - ...set your goals realistically
 - ...make a commitment to your program and believe that it will work!

So, where do you go from here? That is up to you and the women in your church. Remember **TO BE FLEXIBLE**. If something doesn't work, put it aside and try something else. Don't throw away the idea altogether...it might work another time. Remember **TO BE CREATIVE**. There are times when our programs can become stale and people lose interest. If you see that the women are not participating, find something that will spark their interest. After you have completed a project or program, **EVALUATE!** Is this a project you would like to do again, or does it need to go into file 13?

THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT PROGRAM can be whatever you want it to be for your church. We have just given you the basics, and we are asking you to take the time to help us develop this much needed program in our District.

**"THERE ARE NO RULES FOR LEAPING INTO THE NEW, BECAUSE NO ONE HAS
EVER BEEN THERE BEFORE." - Sister Corita-**

**THE WOMEN'S SECRETARIAT STATE LIAISON AND
REPRESENTATIVE FORM**

If you have been appointed by your church to be The Women's Secretariat (TWS) Representative for your church, please fill out the following form. This information will help us keep you up to date on what is happening with TWS in our District and throughout the Fellowship.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER (H) _____ (W) _____

If you are a TWS State Liaison what state are you representing? _____

If you are a TWS Representative what church are you representing? _____

Does your church have an established Women's Program? _____

If so, what are some of the things you do in your Women's Program? _____

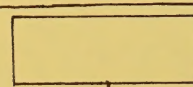
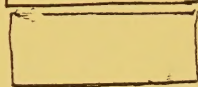
How would you like to see The Women's Secretariat Program developed in the GLAD District? _____

WE ARE EXCITED about what is going to happen with The Women's Secretariat in the GLAD District, and we are excited that you are going to be a part of it all!!! We would like to thank you for making your commitment to this program, and we pray that it will be a blessing to you.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: Libby Puckett - 4019 Teakwood Drive - Charlotte, North Carolina - 28217

TWS DISTRICT CHAIR

TWS DISTRICT CO-CHAIR



TWS STATE LIASONS

ALABAMA

GEORGIA

MISSISSIPPI

N. CAROLINA

S. CAROLINA

TENNESSEE

TWS REPRESENTATIVES

COVENANT

ALL SAINTS

RAINBOW

ASHEVILLE

COLUMBIA

CHATTANOOGA

TUSCALOSSA

FAMILY OF GOD

GULF COAST

CHARLOTTE

CHARLESTON

KNOXVILLE

HUNTSVILLE

FIRST

HICKORY

MYRTLE BEACH

NASHVILLE

CORNERSTONE

AUGUSTA

HI. COUNTRY

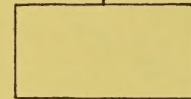
GREENVILLE

SAFE HARBOR

MONTGOMERY

CHRIST COV.

NEW LIFE



TRI-CITIES

COASTAL GA.

ST. JOHN'S

ST. JUDE

ST. MARY'S

WINSTON SALEM

